

Mailroom

[ONE?] COPY WITH THE WOODDRUM COMMITTEE Copy — 1

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview 18 Beliefs and customs — Folkstuff

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Saul Levitt

ADDRESS 557 West 144 Street

DATE May 3, 1939

SUBJECT Maritime

1. Date and time of interview

May 2

2. Place of interview

In the mailroom of the Union.

3. Name and address of informant

(Group of speakers.)

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4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.

x

5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

x

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

The mailroom; like any shipping office, this one with a bulletin board on mail received so that seamen just off ships come in and scan it all day long. The Pilot, Union publication, is filed here in bins. The mailroom is used as a gathering place by some of the men.

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Saul Levitt

ADDRESS 557 West 144 Street

DATE May 3, 1939

SUBJECT Maritime SAILOR NEWS FROM SPAIN.

Seville, Malaga, all of the ports under the Rebel regime, we'd pull in empty and come out with olives, anchovies — sherry wine from Malaga. Layin' into port at Seville we

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were goin' up this river what-the-hell-do-you-call-it — the Godikiver — the Guadalquiver that's right. An' on the shore we seen the people sittin' outside the huts an' nacherally why goddamit the sun out an' it's a new port. We line up along the rail wavin' at them people an' not a soul waved back. Then Jack Cordo gives 'em the loyalist salute an' they disappear like a lot of antelope. One old man saluted back and bejeezus his old lady lays into 'im and drives 'iem into the house. It was too quiet an' peaceful for your nerves.

I RUN INTO MCINTYRE THAT WAS ON THE WISCONSIN WHICH RAN THE BLOCKADE INTO BARCELONA. HE'S GOT THE JITTERS FROM LOOKIN' OUT FOR PLANES. JUST SAW ONE OF 'EM THAT DIDN'T FIRE BUT HE'S GOT THE JITTERS SINCE THEN JUST AS IF HE WAS IN THE WAR.

We seen one Italian destroyer comin' into port. They ran down the Italian flag at the pier in Seville an' up went the Rebel flag. The port officials come down as soon we're in an' start to put on the charges bejeezus.

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For the port entry, says one of 'em, rubbin' his hands, that'll be four hundred dollars. An' for the carabineros for protection that'll be another four hundred dollars. An' for the-let's see-that'll be another four hundred dollars. Bejeezus the company paid.

We couldn't go ashore all the time we was in port. You could see them tin soldiers marchin' back an' forth all day. Them Moors was dressed like all the other Rebel soldiers. Jack Cordo painted the gangplank one night 'campo de concentracion numero uno, and boy' did that get them.

DID YOU EVER SEE A PRETTIER TOWN THAN SEVILLE.

There's Rebel flags all over the place an' Jack got ashore one day. I always thought Jack was a 'queer' y'know with his high voice but not now I didn't. He was standin' on the street just off the pier when them soldiers passed by. Everybody gives 'em that salute but Jack

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don't do nothin'. The lootenant gives Jack a godalmighty thwack on the south side with the butt end of the gun and Jack swung at 'im from the sidewalk an' ran like hell up the gangplank into contracion camp numero uno.

There was hell to pay. The officials come on board an' the captain calls Jack down. What's the idea of assualtin' a soldier of the gover'ment, he says,. Well, says Jack, I'm not goin' to give a furrin salute which I don't know how to do right. I mighta saluted an' got my brains blowed out. What's his idea givin' me a whack in the arse?

THAT SEVILLE IS THE PRETTIEST TOWN I EVER SAW.

They patched that one up allright but Jack was mad bejeezus. He sneaked ashore one day and got hold of a rebel flag an' did his dooty in it. But they got him an' they near killed lim for the little trick.

HE DIDN'T HAVE TO GIVE NO GODDAM SALUTE IN THE FIRST PLACE. WHAT'S OUR CONSULS DOIN' IN THEN MEDITERRANEAN PORTS? YOU'RE AN AMERICAN CITIZEN AN' IF YOU GET IN A JAM THEY LET YOU GET SHOVED IN A FURRIN CLINK TO ROT AN' DIE. FELLER GOES SANDHAWG WILD FER A LITTLE WHILE AFTER A LONG TRIP AN' THE SHIP IS GONE AN' HE CAN'T GET NO ADVICE FOR NOTHIN' FROM THE CONSUL.

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In Malaga five of those carabineros worked it swell with Jack an' the radio operator. One of the boys kept watch an' the carabineros came on board into the radio cabin. They wanted to hear the shortwave radio from Valencia and Madrid.

THAT SEVILLE IS THE PRETTIEST TOWN.

I met a girl in Malaga that says her father's captain of this ship now that's lyin' off of Staten Island an' she says to me 'give him a message but I'll be damned I says, I'll be damned —

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I'VE SEEN SOME OF THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT SHIPS THAT WERE BEIN' HELD FOR THE END OF THE WAR LYIN' IN THE ROAD OUT OF THE HARBOR AT BUENOS AYRES. THERE'S NO SIGHT LIKE SHIPS WAITIN' AN' WAITIN' LIKE THAT.

an' I'll be damed I says again if I'll take a message back to that ship, do you know senorita how many boys in this union went over to this war on the right side of it, and do you know many ain't never comin' back again? I says.

THAT SEVILLE MUST BE ONE OF THE PRETTIEST TOWNS IN THE WORLD.